Volume XCIV No. 7 April 23, 1971 40 cents

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MICHAEL MURRAY **ALBEE'S END GAME**

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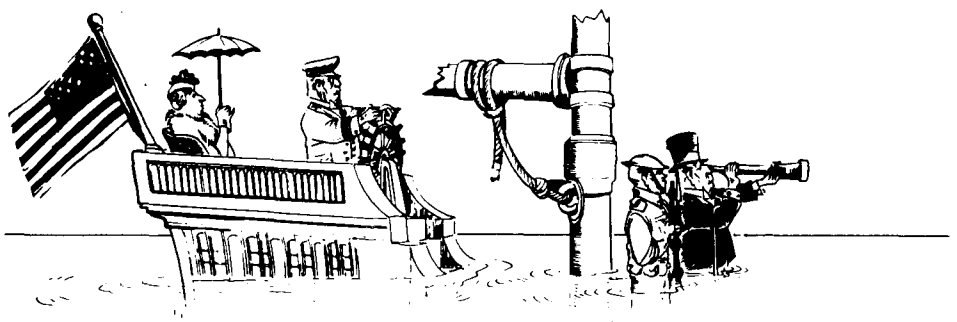
Late-Comers In the Empire Business



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WHY I WENT TO JAIL

THE HARD-HAT OF THE HEARTLAND

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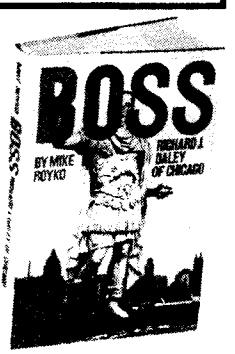

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NEWS & VIEWS

Timed Atrocities?

Two Liberation News Service staffers just back from Hanoi have injected a new horror thought into the ways of American air policy.

Specifically, that American air strikes against North Vietnam were not only aimed at civilian targets, but timed so as to cause greatest toll in terms of civilian life.

LNS-ers Karen Kearns and Anne Dockery elicited this information from the man who is head of the North Vietnamese Commission for the Investigation of U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam, Colonel Ha Van Lao.

Ha Van Lao spoke in the context of the 1965-68 raids.

When a factory was bombed, he said, the bombing occurred "during the changing of shifts, so they could kill the greatest number of people. When they bombed a school they did it during class time. When they bombed a church they did it during Mass."

Propaganda? Perhaps . . . But the anti-personnel nature of so many American tactics in Vietnam doesn't allow one to be too sure that Ha Van Lao is talking extravagantly.

Ha Van Lao was asked whether a War Crimes Commission wasn't fruitless, and whether he wasn't cynical about international law, since "you know that there will never be a trial like Nuremberg in the United States."

The North Vietnamese colonel thought a moment and replied slowly:

"The U.S. is being tried, not materially, but politically and spiritually by the tribunal of humanity. The people of your country cannot be fooled for long; eventually the truth will be laid bare.

"I am not cynical. If the international laws are fair, all the peoples of the world will defend them. In the long run, even the aggressor will have to face the justice of the law."

Foot-in-Mouthism

At the height of the Manson trial, Richard Nixon came within an eyelash of causing a mistrial by prejudging Manson "guilty."

A year ago December, when charges were first leveled against William Calley, Nixon termed Mylai "certainly a massacre," thus raising the question whether Calley or anyone else brought to justice over Mylai could get a fair trial.

Now Nixon's interfered in court procedures again, first by ordering Calley's release from stockade, then by announcing his intention to review the case personally.

White House spokesmen swear that Richard Nixon has no intention of influencing the Calley case, just as he had no intention of influencing the Manson case, and that "as a lawyer" he knows what he is doing when he opens his mouth on cases which are still in the legal processes.

Well, maybe he does. Certainly he should; he's been a lawyer since 1937—something of the profession's code of discretion should have rubbed off.

But if he does, it's still bumbling, and not the sort of lawyerly conduct that will have schools of law competing for his talents after he's out of office . . . except maybe law schools in the nation's emotion belt.

Arresting a Bishop

The recent arrest and detention in South Africa of the Anglican Bishop of Zululand has focused attention anew of the most hated symbol of *apartheid*—the pass book.

Bishop Alphaeus Zulu was picked up by police at five o'clock in the morning at a religious center near Johannesburg and bundled off to jail for not producing the pass book all Africans over age 16 must carry in South Africa at all times.

The book is a 90-page item containing identity card, finger-prints, photograph, record of the individual's contract of employment and the monthly signature of his employer, tax receipts and permits to be in a given area.

The charges against Bishop Zulu were hastily dropped after it was realized that the 65-year-old churchman was a member of the royal house of his tribe and a president of the World Council of Churches. But another and larger question cropped up: what happens to the 600,000 Africans who are charged each year for not having the pass book on their person?

They are fined, imprisoned and harassed. Some are alleged to have been packed off to prison farms owned by white settlers without their families being informed.

One South African magistrate has labeled the business a kind of latter-day "press-gang system." But still it goes on. Over 1,700 Africans are prosecuted each day under the pass laws.

It can't last forever, however. The day of retribution will come, and when it does, it won't be pleasant for those who have demeaned a whole race of people and made them virtual slaves.

Orwell's America

I. Newspeak

SAIGON (LNS)—The crisply uniformed U.S. Army lieutenant colonel was briefing a group of foreign military attachés in Saigon, writes *Time* magazine. "As of today, no ARVN (South Vietnamese) elements remain in Laos," he began. "Enemy forces are now chasing them toward the border—wait, I don't mean to use that word. They are *following* them to the border."

II. Doublethink

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (LNS)—Commenting on the defeat of the U.S.-backed invasion of Laos at a convention of Minnesota Republicans, California's right-wing Governor Ronald Reagan explained that the massive retaliation by Laotians and North Vietnamese means that "The enemy has shown that he is not going to sit back and let us withdraw."

Odds and Ends

—*Le Monde* quotes a South Vietnamese major's response to a U.S. evaluation that the 1st South Vietnamese infantry division will need "two months to recover [from Laos] in terms of military strength, efficiency and morale":

"Two months! We lost some of our best officers, NCOs and men in Laos. And the ones that got back aren't too happy about having been used as bait for the American Air Force. Two months to get over that? In terms of strength, maybe. In terms of efficiency and morale, no."

—A suburban New Orleans parish has fueled the argument whether the dedication of Catholic parents to parochial schools matches that of the bishops. Faced with the alternatives of higher tuition or closure, parents of St. Jerome's, Kenner, opted for closure by preregistering at the increased tuition rate only 77 of their school's 414 pupils.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

The St. Raymond 9

Detroit, Mich.

To the Editors: Re: the Letter to the Editor in the April 2, 1971 issue by Rosemary Gemperle. It is unfortunate that Rosemary Gemperle has interpreted the action of the nine sisters who resigned at St. Raymond School as one of "walking out." In the public statement which the sisters made to the parish and which was picked up by the press and television, the sisters stated "We leave the school in a spirit of Christian love, hoping that the parish will see fit to have sisters working in OTHER forms of education and Christian service in St. Raymond's. We are convinced that there are many forms of service in the parish which at present are not being adequately met . . ."

It appears to us at this time, that the problem of white racism in this parish is definitely an "adult" problem and needs to be met at this level. The school represents an institution which is perpetuating that racism and therefore can no longer be staffed by religious women. We would like to "stay and fight" as you put it; however the members of the parish at this time seem to think that unless we staff the school, we have no place here. We know the problem exists here and would like to stay and work with it.

SISTER MARY MARGARET SLINGER, I.H.M.
Principal of St. Raymond School
and one of the
nine resigning sisters

Kazantzakis' Struggle

Marshall, Minn.

To the Editors: I very much appreciated the article on Nikos Kazantzakis in the February 26 issue by Joseph Blenkinsopp. I have for some time felt that Kazantzakis has much to offer to a world which finds itself both on the brink of destruction and of those new possibilities which lie beyond the ultimate negation, and welcome the article

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COMMONWEAL *A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.*
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1971 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada, $12 a year. Foreign $14. Single copies 40¢

APPEAL TO THE BISHOPS

Shortly after this editorial is printed, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops will hold its spring meeting, with the particular purpose of planning for the international Synod of bishops next September. Surely it is not asking too much to plead that the bishops do not turn deaf ears to the cries for justice from Mylai and all of tortured Indochina. Indeed, this topic is eminently fitting even within the narrow confines of the meeting's announced subjects: the Synod this fall has two topics, and one of them is world justice. If Indochina does not come under that rubric, where does it belong?

We have not agreed but we have at least understood why the bishops have not felt that they could as a body flatly condemn the war in Indochina. Though it gets harder and harder to grant as the months go by and the horror stories mount up, we are still willing to concede that among 200 men, some of good will might not be ready for a total condemnation of the United States role in Vietnam. (This does not explain why almost no individual bishops have spoken up.) But the Calley trial and the subsequent public reaction to his conviction have raised issues that far transcend the judgment of an individual or a group of individuals on a particular war. Encouraged by the President of the United States, a sizable body of American citizens is now defending, not a simple error of judgment or a mistake made in the heat of combat but the cold-blooded murder of unarmed and unresisting men, women and children. No bishop—indeed, no Christian, no moral man, no one not maddened by nationalism—can defend such conduct, no matter what he thinks about the original merits of the war itself. In fact, those who support the war, as the Catholic bishops have tended to do by their silence, might well be said to bear a special responsibility to disown conduct such as that of Lt. Calley.

We call upon individual bishops, then, to take the lead in this grave matter. We call upon them to take this action, citing what they themselves said in the course of a 1966 statement generally supporting the war: "While we cannot resolve all the issues involved in the Vietnam conflict, it is clearly our duty to insist that they be kept under constant moral scrutiny. No one is free to evade his personal responsibility by leaving it entirely to others to make moral judgments." With that statement we agree completely,

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and we now ask the bishops to heed their own words. We make this appeal to the bishops without hesitation, knowing full well that we speak, however unworthily, in a long tradition of Christian peace-making. War has always been essentially repugnant to the Christian spirit; when St. Thomas Aquinas considered the question, it is typical that he asked not if war was justified but if it was always sinful. No Christian can escape the duty to work for peace, and this includes bishops.

Not so long ago, Paul Blanshard spoke for many when he questioned the loyalty of American Catholics to their country, and as short a time ago as the Kennedy campaign there were many who echoed the question in all seriousness. Yet the ironic thing about this always was that the critics were dead wrong; if Catholics in this country have had one outstanding fault, it has been that of assenting to almost every national policy without question. No doubt part of the reason for this was the fact that the church here was an immigrant church; part was the reaction to the attacks themselves. Whatever the causes, the time for automatic assent to any and every national policy is long past. Indeed, an example of how the bishops should confront "controversial" issues is now provided by some of their own commissions. The repeated statements of the bishops' Latin American Bureau on questionable U.S. involvements in specific South American nations; the opposition of the bishops' Department on International Affairs to the present draft system; the recommendation of the same department that Catholics who are stockholders in industry in Southern Africa use their influence to effect radical reform there—these illustrate the kind of thing the bishops themselves must be willing to say.

In this instance, we see no way the Calley massacre can be justified, and to turn its perpetrator into something of an American hero is a national disgrace. We do not see how the bishops can ignore the affair and the larger questions it raises for America and the world, unless they are to say frankly that questions like abortion and birth control concern them but not the massacre of grown men, women and children at the hands of fellow-Americans. Repugnance for violence has always been deep-seated in Christian writing on war, and the consistent effort of the church over the centuries has been to lessen and contain such violence. How true this should be now, not only of the Calley Affair but of the mindless and indiscriminate slaughter of civilians throughout Indochina. More than 350,000 civilians have been killed in Vietnam, most of them as the result of deliberate U.S. policy in bombing and shelling. Before what court will this nation stand trial? Who will be our judge?

As the horror at Mylai and countless other events prove, the tragedy of modern war is that it has escaped from traditional moral restraints, that it is fought with little or no sense of proportion, that it almost automatically leads to Nagasakis and Hiroshimas, to Hamburgs and Dresdens and, yes, to Mylais—and usually, to our shame, without effective Christian witness being raised in protest. This road to war with no holds barred, to war against civilians as the United States is waging it in Indochina, represents the road back to barbarism, and again to our shame it must be admitted that the United States has already gone a good distance down that terrible path. Can the bishops close their eyes and continue to ignore this fact? If they hope to have any influence at all as moral leaders in the future, they must now vigorously and courageously summon the nation back from the precipice of barbarism. They must insist that the murder of innocents is never permitted, from the air or on the ground, in the name of country or no. If in the aftermath of the Calley affair they fail in this, the judgment of history on them will be harsh.

Ghettoizing Culture In South Africa

The *laager*—the Afrikaner's defensive circle of ox-wagons—had its historical demise long ago; but it still lingers symbolically to dictate the South African stance toward the rest of the world. The latest manifestation of the *laager* mentality is a new bill which would, in effect, complete the circle around White South Africa's intellectual horizons. The bill is designed to make the censorship of foreign films as rigorous as that of foreign publications. When it is passed, South Africa will be finally cosseted, like some Victorian virgin, against the unknown horrors of doctrinal seduction.

Essentially, the new bill will make it illegal to refer to the contents of any film the censors have not approved, including films still in the making. South Africa reviewers will thus no longer be able to indulge in their mischievous habit of comparing the cut and uncut versions of films. Since new films are shown abroad long before they reach South Africa, any foreign newspaper or magazine carrying film reviews will routinely have the appropriate section expurgated by customs before distribution in South Africa. Further, it will even be an offense to describe censored material privately—a provision aimed at those South African tourists abroad who take in all the forbidden films and return to brag to their friends about the contents.

Censorship of imported publications is already tightly controlled by the Publications Control Board, a body without a single member with any claims to expertise in English literature. (The powerful post of Secretary of the Board, for example, was held for many years by a woman without even a secondary education; she was the

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niece of the Minister who appointed her.) The philosophy of the Board was outlined last July in a rare statement by its chairman, Mr. J. Kruger, who provided the rationale for more extensive censorship: "Communism is behind the undermining of morality through drugs, sex, force and racial integration, which have Western humanity in their grip." But thanks largely to censorship, he continued, "South Africa is higher in its moral values than many fellow-inheritors of Western civilization, and can still carry the salvation, the direction and the renewal of Western civilization in its purest form."

The pursuit of the "salvation of Western civilization in its purest form" has led the censors to ban some 14,000 publications since 1963, including books by many Nobel prize winners—the exalted status of such writers in the outside world seems to have excited rather than assuaged the suspicions of the Board. Authors of every period, style and political persuasion have fallen under the censors' ax. Among those who have had books banned are George Orwell, D. H. Lawrence, Tennessee Williams, Lawrence Durrell, Brendan Behan, Simone de Beauvoir, John Steinbeck, Iris Murdoch, Bertrand Russell, Ernest Hemingway, James Baldwin, Henry Miller, Leon Uris, John Osborne, Robert Graves, C. P. Snow, Norman Mailer, Jean-Paul Sartre, William Faulkner, and Chiang Kai Shek.

In a few instances the Board's severity has been tempered by efforts to redress injustice—when the censors realized that the contents of books they had embargoed were not quite what they had suspected. Such incidents allow a glimpse of both the Kafkaesque criteria and abysmal literary ignorance of the Board. Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native*, for example, was embargoed, apparently on the assumption that it was some saga of African nationalism. The censors also changed their minds about a book of children's bed-time stories, *And So to Bed*, finding perhaps that it did not live up to the lascivious expectations its title had aroused. Alan Bullock's *Hitler: a Study in Tyranny* was kept out of South Africa for many months—perhaps the subtitle hinted that the book might be a little too relevant. But even connoisseurs of the Board's follies found their credulity almost intolerably stretched when a ban was imposed for some time on Anna Sewell's tale of a horse, *Black Beauty*.

Magazines and newspapers often arrive in South Africa with paragraphs and pages clipped, ripped, or blacked out—and many do not arrive at all. Magazines which have run afoul of the censors range from *Playboy* to—for some quite impenetrable reason—*Car Magazine*. All publications from Communist countries are automatically banned, including even proceedings of scientific bodies. Virtually anything emanating from Black Africa is banned as well.

All this is part of a wider effort to achieve in South Africa a kind of cultural and political quarantine. The pattern of isolation includes the banning, without charge, trial, stated reason, or right of appeal, of over a thousand individuals in South Africa whose words, past or present, may never be quoted. These individuals are under a total social death sentence—they may never, for example, be with more than one person at a time, for years on end, and many are under permanent house arrest. The Minister of Justice also maintains a list of persons living abroad whose words may never be quoted. Even television, the one medium which might have given South Africans a window on the world, has long been banned: the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs once described it as "the greatest danger facing Western civilization—I have never seen it, but I know." TV will be introduced only when South Africa's indigenous film industry is sufficiently developed to supply suitable programs and thus reduce reliance on foreign news and documentary services. And if the serenading double-think of the state-controlled radio system is any indication of what Prime Minister Vorster's version of television will be like, South Africa is probably better off without the medium anyway.

It has not been possible to keep South Africans in total ignorance of the views and norms of the rest of the world, but it has been possible to convince most whites in the country that the world is sick, perverted and even mad. The result of this conditioning is the creation of a veritable wonderland of paranoid fantasy. Thus Dr. A. G. Kellerman of the Community Development Board can attack "student exchange schemes such as Rotary and Lions International which help propagate liberalism and its communist shadow among South African youth." The Afrikaner National Student Bond can unanimously condemn American Field Service scholarships as "a liberalistic, humanistic attempt to denationalize the Afrikaner." The Administrator of the Transvaal can warn of "the dangers of sending young people on study tours overseas and of unnecessary exposure of our strong young manpower." And the Rev. D. J. Vorster, Head of the *apartheidist* Dutch Reformed Church and brother of the Prime Minister, can state flatly: "The world is wrong, and we shall follow our course to the end."

South Africa is engaged in nothing less than an attempt to defy the 20th century. Cultural philistinism scarcely disturbs the men who run South Africa, and to them it is a small price to pay for a sense of security. But ultimately, safety is not that easily bought. Founded on fear, bigotry and ignorance, the security of white South Africa is more likely to prove as illusory as that of the ostrich.

IAN ROBERTSON & JIM FISHKIN

(Ian Robertson, former president of the National Union of South African Students, who was banned from his native land for his opposition to apartheid, *is currently a law student at Cambridge. Jim Fishkin is a political science graduate from Yale who is also a student at Cambridge.)*

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WHY I WENT TO JAIL

PETER STEINFELS

There is a bumper sticker which reads, "All our boys in Vietnam are P.O.W.'s. Bring the troops home!" That play on words illuminates a reality which is not limited to American soldiers in Asia. As the deep earth tremors from the Calley affair so powerfully demonstrated, we have all become prisoners of war.

A group of what were mainly seminarians, Protestant and Catholic, decided to render that state of imprisonment more visible by spending Holy Week in jail, fasting. On Palm Sunday evening their effort began at a church service including a few words from Eugene McCarthy and Paul McCloskey. The next morning they conducted a non-violent, "disruptive" demonstration: they prayed and sang and read Scripture on a sidewalk near the White House in protest of "the contradiction between the Easter promise of life and the bodies in the ditches of countless Mylais." They were arrested; spent the week in jail as planned, fasting from solid foods; were released Good Friday; saw the charges against them dismissed in two trial cases. Many of them remained in Washington fasting until Easter morning.

This Holy Week witness was joined by several ministers, priests, and professors, by Bob Hoyt from the *National Catholic Reporter,* by Wayne Cowan and Bob Harsh from *Christianity and Crisis,* and by myself.

There was nothing heroic about our act, and certainly nothing—as the standard put-down goes—"romantic." The group was fully sensitive to the dangers of self-righteousness and moral snobbery—and too good-humored, in fact, to run much risk along those lines. We had the best legal advice from beginning to end, for while the poor need a good lawyer to get them out of jail, people like us need a good lawyer to get them into jail and keep them there.

Why did I go to jail? Even now, I am not sure that I can fully explain my reasons to myself, let alone anyone else. For one thing, I am one of the many who have had misgivings about a certain tendency in the peace movement toward anti-war one-upmanship, a feeling that if one cannot do something more dramatic or dangerous than the last person, if one cannot launch a demonstration bigger than the last demonstration, then one does nothing at all. Whatever the necessity for uncompromising acts of conscience and dramatic forms of protest, a solid base of grass roots politicking, Washington lobbying, and endless letter-writing was still called for. I have no taste for attitudes which seem to belittle rather than complement such activities.

Why did I go to jail? Well, for all the obvious reasons. "Sometimes people have to make a fuss about the war," I explained to my daughter, who is five. A little fuss, to be sure. But not having those hundreds of thousands of dollars, we bought a few seconds of TV time and a few inches of news space with a week of our freedom and a bit of hunger. Then there was the reaction of so many fellow citizens to the Calley trial, a reaction which made the Lenten practices of "prayer and fasting and mortification" seem particularly appropriate.

And a personal reason, too. Charles Péguy once wrote that, "A word is not the same with one writer as with another. One tears it from his guts. The other pulls it out of his overcoat pocket." I suppose, as one who must write about the war and our opposition to it, I was wondering whether the words were coming from my overcoat pocket.

But another factor played a part as well. For some time it has become clear that the division of labor in the peace movement ought to be altered. The young, too, have their "credibility gap"; and they can overcome it by channeling their activities closer to what, in these abnormal times, are commonly called "normal" forms of protest. The burden of revealing the depth, as well as the breadth, of our abhorrence of this war through acts of civil disobedience and non-violent disruption should be shouldered by those who are older and established in their communities.

I went to Washington and to jail partially to learn if it were really possible for doctors, lawyers and businessmen—people perhaps older but dedicated non-heroes like myself—to take up the burden of militant opposition to this war. I found that it is certainly possible.

On April 24, there will be a mass march and rally in Washington; during the week following, a "People's Lobby" will engage in "aggressive dialogue" with government people at all levels. One senses a new mood in the peace movement, a regeneration of an earlier spirit of non-violence, a regained feel for the problems of communication.

The Holy Week witness was, in a way, a pilot project for the peace movement. How it will go from here now depends very much on the way each of us takes up our responsibility. Prison isn't too bad to visit; I wouldn't want to live there. No more do I want to continue living in the prison of the Indochina war.

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MAD DOGS AND WHO GO OUT IN THE MID-DAY SUN?

Late-comers in the empire business

FRANK GETLEIN

Empires have always had their troops all over the territory. They have always believed in some mystique or other of saving the world from barbarism or Marxism. But empires, by and large, have also made money and when they stopped making money they stopped being empires. The Romans organized the world and maintained the peace and exported law along the roads as far as they could reach, but they also shipped back to Rome some portion of everything they could lay their hands on. The bread in the bread-and-circuses formula came with the Egyptian grain ships. In more modern times, while it is undeniably true that the immense benefits of English common law were being conferred on India by the British rule there, it is also true that the tea and the brass went back to the home country. The French brought the enlightenment of the Ecole Normale to selected Arabs, Africans and Southeast Asiatics, but they also shipped back the rubber and the oil in substantial quantities. Thus has it ever been, the Dutch bringing chocolate from Indonesia, the Belgians uranium from the Congo. The values and virtues of metropolitan Europe were freely available for colonial export, but the colonials were expected to put up a little something in exchange, usually the bulk of their national treasure.

We have changed all that. For the first time in history we Americans have invented the nonprofit empire.

The tale is told most briefly by reference to what are obviously the principal seats of our empire, West and East. In Europe, on any scale of measurement, our imperial headquarters is Germany. Since crushing the Nazi threat, we have kept thousands of troops on German soil. In the traditional management of empire, these troops should have been supervising the gathering in of native production and the shipping of it back to the homeland. On the Roman and British models, we should by now be up to our ears in low-cost sauerkraut. Nothing of the sort has happened. On the contrary, conquered Germany has led the race of European recovery, rapidly making itself the wonder child of postwar economy and even threatening the fundamental base of the American economy on its own ground, the superhighway. It took a quarter of a century, but in model-year 1971, the competition of defeated Germany forced the American automobile industry to bring out small, economical, easy-to-repair cars designed chiefly as transportation from place to place, rather than as status symbols or sex surrogates. It is difficult to imagine a more complete conquest of the conqueror by the conquered.

The Germans managed this in a number of ways, but chiefly by getting rid of the awful burden of armaments they had labored under, off and on, since Barbarossa. After enduring all those German gangsters, the West decided the Germans couldn't be trusted with guns, a reasonable enough conclusion. Therefore, German protection was provided by American guns and American gunners. The American people, however, paid the Germans for putting up with their American protection, and the American soldiers, overpaid by German standards, spent big money on everything in Germany. Through these and other channels, American money drained out of America into Germany. Eventually the Germans could even afford to revive an army of their own, with American equipment, but they did it more as an act of ancestral piety than as a move toward providing for their own defense. It just didn't seem right for Germans not to have an army and now they could afford one, having got rich on ours.

FRANK GETLEIN *is well-known as an art critic and author of several books including* The Politics of Paranoia. *The above article is from the forthcoming* "Playing Soldier—A Diatribe," *copyright © 1971 by Frank Getlein. Used with permission of the publisher, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.*

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On the other side of the world, in Indochina, the same situation came into existence, only worse. Our failure to make money out of our occupation of postwar Germany was, in a sense, understandable, even inevitable. After all, the Germans were our cultural equals. They had the same technological knowledge that we had, the same Wernher von Braun and other scientific marvels. They would naturally know what a conqueror would be up to and be ready to foil the exploitation. But Indochina was quite a different story. Subject to invasions from many directions for many centuries, the Indochinese had been kept in technical innocence by their French masters. They had an immensely rich agricultural country and a valuable rubber industry. They constituted a classic example for imperial exploitation, had indeed been exploited by the French right up to the day of that nation's final withdrawal, and would certainly have been exploited fully by the Japanese had they been able to stick around a little longer. The imperial Americans began arriving in Indochina disguised as technical advisors on weaponry, rather as the original Anglo-Saxon imperialists in India had come in as tea-tasters. In a few years we gave up the advisor cover story and were fighting away like Ronald Colman in Lucknow—but with what different results.

We have poured our sons and our treasure into Indochina for very dubious gains. Our treasure ran up against the ancient and honorable Asiatic system of family-based graft and inflated it to monstrous proportions. Our sons, for their part, have had much the same effect on the equally ancient local trade of prostitution.

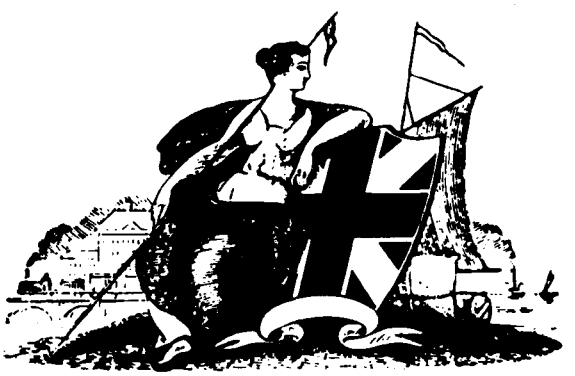
The relationship is backward, too, in the matter of marijuana. American youths in their drafted thousands have been going over to Vietnam now for years and getting stoned on cheap, powerful pot, native to the area. It's supposed to be the other way round. The sweated, exploited natives are supposed to be the ones who seek solace in drugs. The robust, imperialist soldiers are supposed to be the ones who recoil in horror at native ways with drugs and go off to the canteen to guzzle their own honest gin-and-it.

All these strange variations on the theme of empire, these astounding evidences of our somehow having got the whole idea backward, may well be due simply to our having got in on the imperial gravy train shortly after train service was discontinued. We were rather like those small investors in the stock market who are forever getting in just as the big money is getting out, except, of course, that our plunge into empire preferred was and is very big money.

The colonial empire business, a distinct variation from the Romano-European Empire either East or West, was essentially a phenomenon of the century and a half from 1800 to 1950. The inside investors made a lot of money on it in that bull period, and without exception they all got out when that period came to its end. The British departed most gracefully, leaving India and Pakistan to fight it out, Canada to make a new flag. The Belgians and the Dutch recognized a bad thing when they saw it and decamped from Indonesia and the Congo in time to allow both lands to collapse into chaos of different kinds, one called civil war, the other called Sukarno. The French, not unexpectedly, clung the most tenaciously to what remnants of *la gloire* they could fantasize out of torturing the Algerians and the Vietnamese, but eventually even the French called it a day, began regrouping the old firm, chiefly in Africa, and admitted that empire was finished.

At that point the Americans got into the empire line. Years ago, when movies were still fairly new, there was a Wheeler-Woolsey extravaganza set on an American Indian reservation out in Arizona or thereabouts. With the economy of means that is now considered old-fashioned, the show opened with a head shot of an American Indian with accompanying title: "The American Indian has no left sideburn. He has no right sideburn. He has no beard. And he doesn't cut his hair." This was followed by a visual cut to establish the location as an Indian reservation and Wheeler and Woolsey as proprietors of a barber shop. That was about the situation in the empire racket when the United States decided to get into it.

It wasn't that there weren't signs aplenty that this was a bad time to take the imperialist road. The French and their fellow Continentals are beyond our understanding in any circumstances, but the English are our cousins and they were giving the clearest signs of all that the empire



at last was sinking beneath the sun. The big sign, which came as rather a cultural shock to most Americans, was the British electorate's giving the heave-ho to Winston Churchill before the war was properly over at all. Old blood-sweat-and-tears had said, among so many other more distinguished observations, that he had not become his majesty's first minister to preside over the dissolution of the British Empire. Whereupon, the first chance they got, the voters turned him out and put in someone who could preside over just that dissolution. That should have been a clue but we missed it: we blamed the debacle on the cheap desire of the British working class for free dentures and hairpieces; we forgot that the real imperialists in Britain, people of Churchill's class, had been

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getting free dentures and then some out of empire for a century and more, and, of course, we had no way to foresee that in less than a generation we ourselves would be shopping for socialized bandaids on the cheap.

There was another clue. The Jews. Every empire you can think of in the West has, at one time or another, amused itself by defrauding or murdering the Jews in various numbers. The tradition goes back to Babylon and comes all the way up to Russia with its czarist pogroms and Soviet captivity, to France with Dreyfus and all that, and to Britain with the Jewish Homeland in Palestine. Doing in the Jews has been one of the standard privileges of having an empire, as you may learn from the Arch of Titus in Rome and the Belsen and Buchenwald memorials in Germany. It is a long tradition and Britain was merely carrying it on when, before, during and after World War I, the grand old empire flummoxed the Jews in the matter of the Balfour Declaration. The Homeland would be forthcoming, but don't wait up for it, was the message that gradually became clear to Zionists in Britain and the Middle East. Then, abruptly, with the end of World War II, a change in the pattern appeared. The same old talk about a Homeland in the sweet by-and-by was made, but the Jews weren't being flummoxed anymore. They said thank you very much and they took the Homeland by arms, without waiting any longer for it to be passed around.

The point is not the justice of the Jewish cause, nor even the long, long patience of the Jewish people, but simply the evidence of the end of empire that leaps out from the fact of successful Jewish resistance to traditional imperial flimflammery. If empire can no longer suppress the Jews, empire is finished. You could even, if you were mystically inclined, work out scriptural-historical support for the proposition that the Jews are a kind of touchstone of empire: to build an empire is to persecute, defraud, murder or otherwise trammel the Jews. When the Jews strike back and hold empire at bay, empire has reached the end of its run. Since 1948 and even a couple of years before the war of that name, the Jews have fought off the British Empire, the Arab Empire and the Russian Communist Empire, and the Jews survive. This is about as clear a sign as one could want that empire is, to say the least, in long-term eclipse. It's a good time to put your money in something else. But precisely at that moment, the Americans got into empire, posting troops around the globe, entering into imperial alliances and losing money on every imperial ploy that used to be a sure thing.

Why?

It's hard to say, of course, or, from another point of view, it is all to easy to say. Plain old dumbness should never be dismissed without careful examination as the possible root reason behind human actions that seem dumb. It may be that they seem dumb because they *are* dumb, and that's all there is to the mystery. But as an explanation, dumbness has the considerable disadvantage of not being very long. Any loyal American would certainly hope that the explanation for the remarkably stupid timing of his country's entry into imperialism would have more of an explanation than those simple words. Fortunately there are at hand several other explanations, all of them gratifyingly longer.

From a Marxist point of view, any capitalist country has to progress into imperialism just from the nature of the two things, without regard to the historical time at which the transition takes place. The old express train of history keeps puffing along, and when it comes to the switch it takes the turn regardless of whether floods, avalanches and earthquakes have happened since Marx wrote the original schedule. This essentially predestinarian explanation is a little too Calvinistic for most of us, but it does suggest another variant, or even two, of our Calvinist heritage which may well be applicable to our belated imperial dalliance.

Planned Obsolescence

One is the late capitalist, and hence late, late Calvinist, economic development known as planned obsolescence. There are two basic interpretations of planned obsolescence, one optimistic and generally put out by the people who practice it, the other pessimistic and adhered to by the people who suffer from that theory of production. The optimistic view is that every day in every way our industrial production gets better and better and therefore the consumer who purchased, say, a super-eight dodecahedron special last year will naturally want to trade it in for a superduper model this year. The process releases last year's model back to the market, making work for used-car salesmen and allowing citizens a rung or two down the ladder to taste of last year's luxe. The pessimistic version, on the other hand, has it that American industry is run by a bunch of planning obsoleters whose job it is to design things so that they will fall apart the day after the warranty expires and thus maintain a lively demand for replacements.

Either way, obviously, the thing about planned obsolescence is the steady discarding of produced goods by consumers who, just a few decades ago, would have been in the market for goods likely to last a lifetime. It is more than conceivable that if planned obsolescence in either sense has become a fundamental strain in our economy, then empire, and the constant war that it entails when entered into prematurely or post-maturely, are the inevitable best natural obsoleters any planner can ask. If you obsolete a motor car by changing the design from bulbous swellings to bauhaus sleekness, or kitchen appliances by changing the fashionable color from avocado to desert sand, there will always be the cheapies in the crowd who will struggle along with last year's shape or tint and there's nothing you can do about it. But when

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you obsolete something with a cannon or a bomber, it stays obsolete.

The other Calvinist strain operating in favor of our tardy imperialism should be more recognizable, for it is the American Puritan heritage. The stern and rockbound souls who settled in New England in the seventeenth century have left their mark upon our present situation no less than the Laughing Cavaliers whose would-be descendants keep laughing all the way to the bank in Charleston, South Carolina. In a country as big as this one, there has always been the temptation to empire, hence that picture in the Capitol, complete with inscription. But in the United States, thanks to our Puritan heritage and in sharp contrast to the style in other lands, the temptation has always been recognized as a temptation and never confused with opportunity.

At the very beginning of the Puritan residence here, by way of example, the New Englanders discovered that their land was full of rocks. Instead of anticipating the example of later Americans and moving on out to Iowa or some other reservoir of rich soil and easy plowing, the New England Puritan hacked away at his rocky fields in the belief that the added labor was good for his soul.

A somewhat later generation of New England Puritans got into the slave trade, but the manner of this involvement is most instructive. They didn't actually own slaves, not because that was immoral in itself, but because it led to easy living and that was immoral. Owning slaves led to dancing at the cotillion and rocking on the veranda while Uncle Junius fetched up another julep. The Puritan preferred to buy slaves cheap in Africa, sell them dear in Carolina and go home to denounce his customers as wicked slave-owners.

When that record is remembered, it no longer surprises that residually Puritan America only got into the empire trade when the trade had gone to hell completely and was a nonpaying, exceedingly painful, domestically divisive and foreignly fearful line of work. If we'd gone in when the going was good, we might have enjoyed it. Only now, with the bottom dropped out of sight from the market and no recovery in sight, could we become imperialists. We can't hope to profit from it. It doesn't even offer us the sort of cushioned upbringing a generation or two of Englishmen enjoyed in India and the rest.

We are in it because it is so awful and that's so good for you.

BATTLE OF THE BOYNE II

Beyond the crunch in Northern Ireland

JOAN WYATT

Were you under the impression that those angry crowds of Northern Irish, seen almost nightly on TV hurling the sidewalks at each other over the heads of, and sometimes at, British troops, are fighting over religion and that they had best be ignored in this age of ecumenism?

Far from religion, the fight is over civil rights and, beyond and on top of that, national self-determination of a subject people conquered by the British in 1170. And, with at least 30 dead since January 1971, the entrance of a lunatic fringe of the IRA, and more British troops pouring in to keep the peace and by their very presence disturbing it further, it had better be resolved, justly and soon, or the whole place will blow into the Irish Sea.

Religion serves only to identify the sides: Catholic for the native Irish minority who resent the British rule and how it treats them and Protestant for the loyalist "Scotch" or Anglo-Irish who like it that way. Their battle is taking place in a mad corner of Ireland flying the Union Jack, a tightly controlled one-party state (to the native Irish it looks totalitarian) under the jurisdiction of a democracy —Great Britain.

Here in brief is the background: When the British throne went Protestant, it "planted" settlements of Scotch Presbyterians in Ulster where it was strongest to give it a loyal Protestant power base in Catholic and hostile Ireland. It lured them there with large tracts of land taken from the natives by whatever means necessary, including murder, which elicited many bloody native uprisings to which the settlers replied in kind, looking as their heirs do today, to the mother country for protection.

These uprisings finally made their point, and in 1921 Britain solved its "Irish problem" by geographical partition. It gave what is now the Republic of Ireland its freedom and kept Ulster, setting it up with a local parliament in Stormont outside Belfast, under the final authority of Westminster. It may very well have wished to wipe its hands completely of the Irish, but it couldn't because of the uproar this would have caused among the one million descendants of the settlers who did not want to be aban-

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JOAN WYATT, *a Boston writer, recently returned from a trip to Ireland where she was able to interview a wide range of leaders involved on both sides of the Irish question.*

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doned to what they considered (with some reason) an unfriendly neighbor. In fact, they threatened to kick the king into the Boyne and crown the Kaiser if Britain did this.

The fear of abandonment and what must have been a certain guilt at their treatment of the natives congealed the loyalists into a hard, united front that saw enemies wherever it looked: across the border a people who wanted their whole country back dominated by a church the Ulster Protestants regarded as a natural antagonist and across the sea a parent government they did not quite trust.

To calm their fears and give them enough territory for power and safety, Britain scattered them very thinly over as much land as possible while still allowing them to have the necessary numbers for political control over the half million native Catholics who lived in Ulster too and didn't see why they should leave. How the loyalists maintain this tenuous two-to-one majority over a minority known to be prodigious breeders is the crux of the Northern Irish civil rights problem. Indeed, if there were fewer natives, they wouldn't be a threat and would be better treated, enjoying the benefits and freedoms of the British citizenship which is theirs by right. As it is, keeping them in minority status and hopefully driving them out has to be the policy of the state, represented by the only real political party, the Unionists. (The Catholics have one major party, the Nationalist, and a couple of others, but they are all weak or in disarray because they could never get enough representatives in government to be effective.)

In 1948, the Unionist M.P. for a country with a Nationalist majority told a Unionist convention: "The Nationalist majority in the county, nothwithstanding a reduction of 336 in the year, stands at 3,684. We must ultimately reduce and liquidate that majority. . . . I would ask the meeting to take whatever steps, however drastic, to wipe out this Nationalist majority."

This was done by the interlocking triad of civil rights grievances: gerrymandering so that minority votes do not count; ghetto housing, nailed to gerrymandering since housing districts are also voting districts; and job discrimination.

The classic example of gerrymandering is Derry (or Londonderry to the anglophile) which is the second largest city and has a two-to-one Nationalist majority. In 1966, 20,102 Nationalists returned 8 representatives to the City Council, while the 10,274 Unionists returned 16. How? You cram the Catholics into a few voting/housing districts, and sprinkle the Unionists over the rest.

In case gerrymandering didn't work, the vote was also tied up in a mare's nest of complexities aimed at Unionist control of local government, the friend at city hall who controls housing (all new housing is public housing), public jobs (or any jobs, really, since employers of course wouldn't want to offend the council), and police protection. For one, there was the property qualification that gave the vote only to heads of households (needless to say more Unionists got housing from the housing authority than Nationalists) and the businessman's vote which gave multiple votes to employers according to the worth of their businesses. (Needless to say, there aren't many Catholic businessmen; it's hard enough for them to find jobs.)

Now, much has been made of the reforms granted in the wake of the civil rights movement and under pressure from London. For instance, one man/one vote, after two years of debate at Stormont, was finally granted for local elections (it has always been in force for parliamentary elections). Why then are the Catholics still complaining? Because, dear reader, the elections have been called off until 1972.

All of this looks as if the Unionists are afraid of the universal franchise, and makes some doubt the official census which placed the population in 1966 exactly where it was in 1921, the old two-to-one Unionist majority. But with Belfast having the greatest concentration of Unionists, a 60/40 split, and the rest of the country being more heavily Nationalist, and many areas having a *Nationalist* majority, their feeling that the census was rigged is understandable. The real split might be 50/50 and the Unionists might know it. After all they took the census.

Other Ways

If voting restrictions don't work, there is job discrimination. Here is how the Prime Minister, Sir Basil Brooke, put it in 1933: he urged businessmen to "employ good Protestant lads and lassies." In 1934, he said: "I recommend those people who are loyalists not to employ Roman Catholics. . . . You are disenfranchising yourselves that way. . . . If we don't act properly now, before we know where we are, we shall find ourselves in the minority instead of the majority."

With the split so close, every Protestant vote counts. This is where religious/racial discrimination comes in to solidify the Protestant vote to the Unionist party. People vote religion rather than interest. Bernadette Devlin sees very clearly that if the people could get over their religious hang-up (Catholics aren't too fond of Protestants, either), they could see their common economic interests and form an effective opposition party. In Ulster, even more than in other Western countries, the poor, unemployed, or underemployed outnumber the wealthy. Obviously, the government fears this alliance and so, while it is made up of many upper class, "enlightened" people who deplore the excesses of religious prejudice, still, unfortunately, it is necessary to keep them in power. Small favors to the Protestant poor give them one small "up" over their poor Catholic neighbors, much as "whiteness" was the only status symbol of the poor whites in the American South and enflamed them to maintain the ruling group where it was—on top.

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Enter the Reverend Ian ("I am at war with the Catholic church") Paisley, recently elected to Westminster, and the Orange Order of which he is the unofficial spokesman. Together they cement the Protestants against the Catholics. Almost every Protestant belongs. Why? Do you want a job? Are you perchance running for elective office? Do you belong to the Order?

A masonic-type organization, it is basically fundamentalist and in Belfast, where it is, of course, strongest, REPENT, THE END OF THE WORLD IS COMING streaks across the billboards, showing the predilections of the majority and a very good possibility for the near future in that highly combustible city, grim to the point of lockjaw.

It is named for King William of Orange (King Billy) who defeated Catholic King James of Scotland at the Boyne in 1690 for the throne of England. It's famous for chauvinistic parades—booming drums, oratory for king, country and religion—every summer celebrating that victory. In Derry, they used to top it all off by going to the wall above the Catholic Bogside below and tossing pennies to the residents. A few summers ago, the Bogsiders were waiting and a *fine* riot ensued.

The Order can be counted on to react en masse and on signal that their way of life is threatened, particularly by Popery. This is known as "playing the Orange card," which Randolph Churchill did during the Home Rule for Ireland debate when he feared that the Whigs who favored Home Rule would win over his own Tory party which opposed it. He wrote a friend that "the Orange card is the one to play," went to Belfast, made some inflammatory speeches to the Order, and set off months of rioting. Home Rule was defeated.

Just in case these devices don't work to keep the minority in line, the government has slapped on the Special Powers Act which allows it to arrest without warrant, imprison without charge or trial, search without warrant, prohibit meetings, etc., etc. It is greatly admired by the South African Minister of Justice who in 1966 said he wished he had the Northern Ireland Special Powers Act.

One Orange slogan is "Croppies (Catholics) lie down." In 1968, the Croppies slowly began to stand up and the Northern Ireland Civil Rights movement was born, spurred by the Civil Rights movement in the United States, the granting of free university education to all religions by the British Labor Government, and by television which put the whole show on the world stage. Its backlash was ready-made, but it was invigorated, strangely enough, by the ecumenical movement begun by good Pope John to bring the religions together in brotherhood. This was seen by the Ulster fundamentalists as an attempted Vatican take-over. As Liam da Pour puts it in *Divided Ulster*, they saw the ecumenical Protestant clergy going to the Vatican to exchange the kiss of peace with the whore of Rome.

Like that of the United States, the Irish Civil Rights movement marched, was non-sectarian (many members are Protestant), sang "We Shall Overcome," was non-violent and faced a brutal backlash. During one famous march from Belfast to Derry, the marchers were beaten bloody by Paisleyites with clubs reinforced with spikes, thrown into a river, and then beaten again when they tried to get out. During the melee, Derry civil rights leader Eamonn McCann exhorted them: "I am afraid that (non-violence) is the policy we must support to a lunatic extreme. We must agree that not one single person will retaliate even to save himself from injury. . . ."

Now, not everybody believes in non-violence and the marches did elicit not only backlash, but Catholic retaliation, escalation into riots, invasions of both Catholic and Protestant areas and, in the summer of 1969, two Catholic ghettos living behind barricades for weeks—Free Derry and Free Belfast. At that point, the Prime Minister called in the British troops.

At first they were welcomed by both sides, but their obvious sympathies for the Unionists, shown in far more brutal arms searches in Catholic areas than in Protestant, and finally one vicious raid on a Protestant ghetto turned both against them. And, of course, they are in the middle. DON'T FRATERNIZE, warn the posters, showing a great British boot on the land.

Now, if the world was watching on TV, so was the Republic just next door. It saw its own people being creamed, but there was very little it could do about it.

Granted, every Irishman wants the British out of Ulster —"They robbed it off us," a bellhop in Dublin told me —but they differ considerably about how to do it. The government has pinned its hopes on economic development that will bring the living standards in the Republic up to those in welfare state-supported Ulster; it is also divesting the church of its "special" position—all to make the Unionists *want* to rejoin the rest of the country. The Sinn Fein movement is socialist and supports *political* education and action to bring about a socialist revolution which will topple the Unionists. Its military wing is the Irish Republican Army which recently split between moderates who believe only in defensive action and extremists—the Provisionals—who want to shoot the British out.

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They popped up in the Belfast ghettos this January, with some machine guns, killed some British troops, got some Catholics and Protestants killed, declared war on the IRA moderates, and gave the Prime Minister a beautiful excuse to blame all his troubles on them, call in more British troops, bringing their numbers now to 8,000, and announce a crack-down on "this tiny group of Irish republicans." At the same time, he denied his people were fighting at all, while women and children attacked British tanks and mobs of Catholics and Protestants meet head-on at any public affair, such as a funeral, a soccer game, or the Saturday marketing. A less publicized government announcement was more to the point: it demanded that parents control their children or face legal sanctions. These children, famous as tough guerrilla fighters, are the ones throwing the petrol bombs at the troops. But they don't fight alone. You can bet that their parents and grandparents helped make the bombs. They can't all belong to the IRA. And they aren't all Catholics.

Indeed, the gun-happy IRA Provisionals have little support among the Catholic community. Even the most militant civil rights activists think they are "out of their skulls" because they can't blast the British out, will only get more innocent people killed, and will lose the slowly-gained world sympathy for the civil rights cause. The murder of three young British soldiers this March could turn this tide. Whether or not the IRA did it (the Ulster Volunteer Forces, the Paisleyite answer to the IRA, or some passing madman could have done it in the sure knowledge that it would be pinned on the IRA), their very presence has taken the spotlight off the government and the very real question of its legitimacy, based as it is on a hog-tied vote and dependent for survival on religious/racial prejudice and on the presence of the British army.

So there it lays. On the verge of holocaust. At this writing, Prime Minister James Chichester-Clark has thrown up his hands and resigned, under pressure from right-wing Unionists who accuse him of being "soft on Catholicism" for not cracking down hard enough. With his successor Brian Faulkner, the cap, so tightly placed on the bottle, could come flying off.

What is the solution? There isn't any solution. And there are a thousand. Since everybody else is offering his, here is mine:

Since Britain started it with invasion, made it worse by planting the settlers there, and made it still worse by the always unsuccessful solution of partition, and has legal jurisdiction, Britain must take responsibility for the chaos and settle it once and for all. Let her stop telling the boys back at Stormont for the love of God to grant some reforms while allowing them to grant only token reforms. A threat to withdraw economic subsidies or even the troops might do the trick.

Confronted with a real universal franchise (with elections) which would mean an effective opposition party, my bet is that Stormont would rather that this opposition was formed along economic rather than religious lines. A labor government would be a lot easier to take than a Catholic one. The Unionists then would have to free the Protestant vote to vote its economic interests. Surely, they could pass the word down through the ranks of the Orange Order to cool it?

In short, the Unionists have to face the risks of democracy. They might get voted out of office, but that often happens in a democracy. A plebiscite might vote a return to the Republic. (Many Protestants I talked to said, very cautiously and thoughtfully, that they thought a United Ireland was the only solution.) Or maybe not. But however those chips fell, the decision would have to be accepted by the Republic, the Unionists and Great Britain. If they came down on the side of the Republic, sure the Unionists might grow to like the arrangement. After all, they're Irishmen, too.

With the heat off and an end to partition perhaps in sight, even the IRA and the UVF might lay down their arms. They'd be awfully conspicuous in a peaceful society.

Can It Happen?

But can the heart of my argument—British acceptance of moral and legal responsibility—ever happen? The Irish doubt it. The British have turned a deaf, disbelieving, or bored ear to their grievances since 1170. But they are, as the Irish say, again and again, a decent people. (How can such a decent people, with all the fair play, *treat* us like that? they ask in bewilderment.) The answer is that to be a decent people you can't acknowledge indecent behavior. You deny it, you justify it, you rationalize it, you blame your victims for ingratitude and you set up an image of him that is slightly less than human. ("I didn't believe it as a young man, I don't like to believe it now, but I've come to believe that the British think we're dogs," one very balanced but dedicated Irish republican told me.) But television is bringing the fruits of this attitude into British living rooms now; the British taxpayer might decide not to throw good money after bad; the British industrialist might realize he can't do much business during a civil war and that he loses far more in world goodwill than he gains from his privileged position with the Unionist party; and the British young might possibly make the connection with the Vietnam war—more and more British troops needed to support what must be an unnatural government (why else the need for troops?)—right in their own backyard.

Beyond that, the Rev. Paisley is in Westminster now. He is sure to bring his message—the direct result of government policy—to the British people and government loud and clear. In fact, he might prove to be the *Irish* Orange card now. I have a feeling he'll be an ace.

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THE STAGE

Legend has it that in every New York theater production there is an individual who has the "muscle," and whose will dictates the final result of the hectic collaboration. Edward Albee has recently achieved a muscle that is usually denied to playwrights—even Tennessee Williams fought many a healthy fight with Elia Kazan and lost—and that was equalled only perhaps by that of Eugene O'Neill in his later days. Even as a dying man, O'Neill guarded every syllable of *The Iceman Cometh,* for example, putting a pall on the production and obscuring for the remainder of his lifetime the very real grandeur of the work. Although we may regret that compromises are sometimes made by the "creative" man in the theater, we must also regret that a talented writer is sometimes allowed to be self-indulgent when there is no one powerful enough to say, "Come off it!" at the right moment.

About Edward Albee's *All Over,* someone should have said "Come off it!" long before it reached the production stage, and in fact we will shortly be without one of our good playwrights if someone does not say something at least as blunt to him in the near future. The play is not only self-indulgent in itself, but it is also another step for Albee into a thicket of verbiage which began to sprout ominously in *A Delicate Balance* and became thoroughly overgrown in *Box-Mao-Box,* his most recent work.

In the security of his enormous prestige, Mr. Albee is evolving from a writer into a "writer." Dialogue, and specifically the long spoken set piece (like the story of Jerry and the dog in *The Zoo Story*), was this playwright's specialty, and much of his initial dazzle came from his rhetorical surprises and his good ear for the weird rhythms of human speech, which he recorded honestly and which were made to serve his dramatic purposes.

All Over is a collection of such speeches, but the rhythms are by now so self-conscious, the rhetoric so elaborately precious, that for one thing it does not sound like human speech at all. In phrases that seem to derive from Ivy Compton-Burnett or Henry James, endless parenthetical refinements fog every thought. The author's *A Delicate Balance* begins similarly (but improves later): "If I were to list the mountain of my burdens—if I had a thick pad and a month to spare—that bending my shoulders *most,* with the possible exception of Julia's trouble with marriage, would be your—it must be instinctive, I think, or *reflex,* that's more like it—your reflex defense of everything that Claire . . . etc." Although I was not able to follow many of the similar convolutions in *All Over,* let alone jot them down in a darkened theater, the reader will have to take my word that they are even more twisted and tangled and basically literary.

One result is that the characters all speak with the same voice, and one has to keep a sharp eye on the physical differences between, say Jessica Tandy and Colleen Dewhurst or even between Jessica Tandy and George Voscovec, to be sure who is talking. Nor does this ponderous pattern of hesitation and backtracking contribute anything helpful to either the meaning or the music of the lines. It serves rather to emphasize a basic vagueness at the heart of the play. The fact is that the playwright has here abandoned the dramatic form, and he is now so intent on his *writing* that he has neglected, as also in *Box-Mao-Box,* to create a work to contain it, an *action* over the course of the evening of the sort that has traditionally distinguished the theater from the concert hall.

All Over is a meditation on death. A famous, wealthy man lies dying behind a white screen at the back of a black stage while his wife, mistress, friend, son, daughter, doctor and nurse wait and ponder the implications. There are possibilities of interesting relationships within this group, mostly centering around the wife: she is apparently friendly with the mistress; she does not like her children; she has had a brief affair with the friend. These people are not clear in their feelings about the great man dying behind the screen, but his slow death, the agonizing insistence of it, brings each character face to face with his own life. As the nurse says, in one of the play's brighter moments, "Death—it hits you where you live."

The playwright, however, merely states these relationships without developing them. He has each character ruminate on past incidents, each telling a long story or two like pilgrims en route to some grim Canterbury. Some of the stories and reminiscences appear to bear on current relationships, but most do not. The nurse, for example, whom we never get to know, is granted nonetheless a monologue about another doctor who, it turns out, was her lover. The mistress describes her first affair at the age of fifteen. The friend relates a chance encounter with his former wife, who is insane. Presumably these flights into the past are prompted by each person's proximity to death, but they do not go anywhere—they influence neither the action of the plot nor the interaction of the people, nor, to any discernible degree, the self-knowledge of the story-tellers. Rather than revelations, they seem, in substance if not in form, all too like the anecdotes of any group of people who sit in an anteroom waiting for someone to die, people stunned by mortality into meanderings rather than meaning.

Perhaps we could be encouraged that Mr. Albee seems just slightly at war with himself. He wants to maintain a Beckett-size metaphysical view of death, in a quasi-musical structure of theme and variations, but at the same time his instincts hunger for the sort of character

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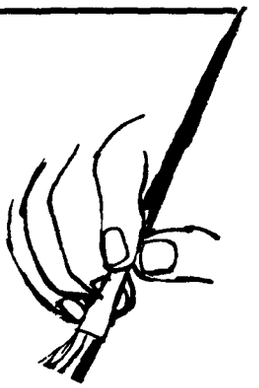
conflict which gave life to *The Zoo Story* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* In this play confrontations do erupt briefly and enigmatically from time to time, but subside quickly. (One, in which the daughter drags in three photographers at the end of the first act, provoking animal screams from the ladylike wife as the curtain falls, is particularly bizarre because its motivation is entirely arbitrary and it is scarcely referred to again.) And ironically, the final confrontation, such as it is, between wife and mistress seems only a gratuitous taste of what that complex relationship might have been, yet at the same time it is so prosaic as to diminish any metaphysical overtones the writer has set up.

Although the actors are directed into pretentiously mythic poses from time to time, they are an accomplished group and make the most of their slim opportunities. But it is the playwright himself who is center stage throughout the play, rambling along, searching for profound things to say. He has not found them, and we would all be better off the next time if he would get out of the way and turn his characters loose.

MICHAEL MURRAY

THE DEATH OF AN ARTIST



John Rudge—'A Christian sinner'

ARCADI NEBOLSINE

On the morning of Sunday, March 7, John Rudge was found slain in his Bowery apartment. The death of this British abstract and metaphysical artist forces us to consider his life and work, which were both alike—remarkable.

He was born in Nottingham, England in 1925. He studied in various art schools and then, after service in the Armed Forces, worked as a professional painter in a variety of places, including Rome, eventually moving to New York in 1964. At some period of his life, he was converted from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism and received a thorough grounding in theology, including mystical. In the last years, he led a life of extreme (sometimes violent) contrasts, typical of New York bohemianism. His pictures, "diagrams of the soul" he liked to call them, were gradually finding their way into distinguished private collections and museums. They both reflect, and compensate for, his personal struggles and anxieties.

Rudge's life and work reveal the "dissociation of sensibility" that was defined and discussed by T. S. Eliot. The artistic personality experiences a crisis down to the religious roots of his being, a sense of religious disorientation. This crisis can greatly complicate the task of the artist, which is to unite in an ordered experience, activities as different, Eliot once said, as the smell of cooking, reading Spinoza, falling in love, etc.

John Rudge's activities included the austerities of artistic discipline, a "down and out" existence in the Bowery, a social life among the rich, canvassing for patrons, and educational work in Harlem district schools. Difficult as it was to reconcile these various activities and impulses, he had the merit of not confounding realms. He did not slide from the salons of the international set to the slums of the underprivileged on the "snow" of some do-gooding cause that provides moral absolution for such piquant activities. He avoided the temptations of radical chic, the sheltering slogans of "social justice," any form of flag-waving.

Rather, I would say, he was a Christian sinner, liable to rise and fall and buffeted accordingly. Even when down and out, his mind—like Orwell's—was singularly clear of cant. He had a fierce, often self-defeating honesty and a strong loyalty towards the church, which he could not think of, due to historical circumstances, as an "objective correlative" for his art and which he would not think of as a shelter.

For him the church was not a guarantee of his moral respectability, a function that has been assumed for many by the various causes of social justice. What was it then? Morality is important, but other things are more so.

First—a vital principle, like "the Blessed Virgin compared to the air we breathe." The function of the Giver of Life takes precedence over the function of arbiter of morality. The church is first of all a touchstone of reality. I AM comes before THOU SHALT.

Second, the church especially in an age of religious bewilderment and lostness is a Cross, an inflicter of burdens.

ARCADI NEBOLSINE, *who has contributed a number of articles and reviews to these pages, is a member of the faculty in the Slavic Department at Yale.*

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John Rudge rejected the Marxist formula "opium of the people" as imprecise, since the church often requires difficulties and inflicts burdens, also suffering them herself.

"I flee the cross which devours me" writes the Franciscan mystic. Rudge often referred to the maxim of St. John of the Cross—that, all other things being equal one should choose the more difficult way, simply because it is more difficult. A lot of his experiments with the canvas can be explained in this way—by the espousal of difficulty. The same applies to his life of poverty, to his bohemian activities. But sometimes he tended to confound the negative way with nihilism, the Night of the Soul with the Heart of Darkness. He was free from cant but he could succumb to the *nostalgie de la boue*. In some ways, he belongs to the age of Huysmans, of the *poète maudit*. He was alien alike to respectable puritanism, and to the puritanism inside-out, which expresses itself in outrage and escapist, gnostic nudity. He had the force to "contemplate his body without disgust." Much in his behavior and speech, which was not without an element of brutal cynicism, was a kind of shock tactic—a way of shocking people into realizing the centrality of serious questions of religion, a way of shaking them from accumulated banalities and complacencies (from which no one, he often said, suffers as much as the *avant-garde*).

Ultimately, Rudge did not deny the importance of morality, once the supreme values of life and suffering were understood. One thing he clearly distinguished. Morality is more valid when based on *agape*, than on resentment. Real morality is one thing, resentment-morality is another. He would have appreciated Nietzsche's remark about Christianity's being strangled by its own morality. Rudge could feel keenly resentful, but he never converted this resentment into a convenient "cause."

Rudge had, in fact, an instinctive tendency to mystic anarchy that may have been an over-reaction to the "sting of the law" as formulated by St. Paul.

The original sin of the Law is that it provokes people to disobey it. The Law is creative-destructive. So, the situation has to be remedied by grace, by a personal Savior. "Law," by the way, is distinct from "order." But if Rudge was skeptical of the Law, he also rejected the cant that sins its way to Jesus.

Having indicated the complexity of John Rudge's religious universe, I must say something about the way he projected this dilemma onto canvas. I think that he was more gifted in the word than in the image. His talent was first dialectical, then visual. Still, he struggled, exerting great intellectual control, to make the "magic marks of immaterial vision." In his painting, the world of figures is reduced to a flat pattern, an arabesque. The resulting flat plan betrays no longer the tangible qualities of daily experience. Thus, like other modern artists, he imposed an abstract order on daily existence, when his religion, despite all its rich complexity and clash of forces, could not provide a concrete order. He was a casualty of the "age of anxiety." He suffered from the crisis, not intellectually, but artistically.

For no amount of forceful commitment can replace the traditional structure of belief, the repository of religious imagery and values that takes centuries to accumulate and sustains quality in art. No abstract immaterial imagery can replace a concrete iconology. Rudge's emotional and intellectual wealth was devoted to "arabesque" and found no sufficient and substantial embodiment. If his mind was Catholic, his paintings were gnostic. Completely free of moral oversimplification (that can degenerate into hypocrisy), he tied himself down to intellectual patterns and diagrams, another kind of simplification.

Probably, this artistic process was cathartic for him in an otherwise often centrifugal existence that has become the lot of many Catholics. But, whatever the risks, he believed, like Kerouac whom he somewhat resembles, in the church as a structure of "order and tenderness." This structure and order is "big enough to take it," which cannot be said of some secular structures, which are provincial in being based too exclusively on moral *fiat*. At any rate, there is no question where Rudge, again like Kerouac, felt that he belonged. That order, he believed, survives the confusions of history and the sins of its members. And both his achievements and difficulties should be understood as efforts to come to terms with, to reflect, that unique and universal order.

His demise, under squalid and unfortunate circumstances, cannot obscure the impression of integrity, vitality and spiritual toughness that he made on those who knew him well. Given a longer life and, perhaps, a more rewarding, *because more resistant*, medium, he might have approached Villon, or "that most Catholic of poets"—Verlaine.

A requiem Mass was held for him on Monday, March 15 at the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows, Pitt Street, celebrated by Father John Langland. To this church, and for the benefit of the Franciscan community, he left the residue of his estate.

JAMES SULLIVAN

PAEAN (IN THE OLD STYLE)

All praise be to the Lord who made
The world and all that live thereon,
Who set the stars and moon and sun
In infinite empyrean.

Who breathes afresh the breath of life
Into each man and each man's son
And upholds good as he has done
Since he began creation.

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BOOKS

The hard-hat of the heartland

Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago

MIKE ROYKO

Dutton, $5.95

Urban Leadership in the Sixties

JAMES CUNNINGHAM

Schenkman, $4.95

Daley of Chicago

BILL GLEASON

Simon & Schuster, $7.50

RALPH WHITEHEAD, Jr.

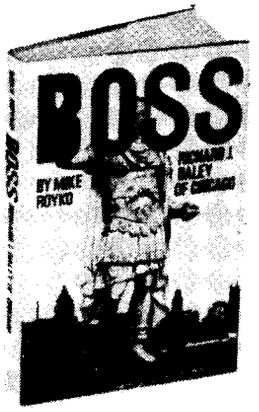
The all-time record for using despotic images to render Mayor Richard Daley was set by a late September number of the *New York Review* just after the 1968 Democratic National Convention. It raked up four. Elizabeth Hardwick likened the mayor to a Pharoah and then skipped up a few millennia to compare him to King Farouk. A few pages later, William Styron called Daley a hoodlum suzerain and then characterized him as the field marshal of a banana republic.

Time magazine, however, rates a special mention for its imagery during Daley's 16 years at City Hall. Its 1963 cover story on the man, for instance, opened by portraying him as a Buddha. (His fellow communicants at Nativity of Our Lord parish no doubt grasped the charm of this one right off.) Prior and subsequent issues have plumbed other empires and monarchies and autocracies for similar characterizations. (*Time*, of course, has a research staff.)

Anyhow, it's remarkable how far these New York people will go simply to paint Mayor Daley as a throwback —a *fat* throwback.

Yet, those comparisons are misleading. Mayor Daley is stylish enough after all to make the best-dressed list year after year. The buildings of his city always show the touch of architecture's *avant garde*. He has been apprised of a political force known as the trade union movement, although a few of the hipper mayors haven't caught on to it yet. And he's dearly loved by at least seven of Chicago's affluent young professionals, his children. No, the mayor might be overweight, but he isn't an anachronism. As Mike Royko put it one day last summer: "Daley is definitely a contemporary son-of-a-bitch."

The Chicago *Daily News*' wily and hard-assed columnist has now built an entertaining book around that judgment. And he doesn't need to turn to the



ancient or the exotic to nail the mayor learnedly. (The book's jacket does show an armored Daley striding across the Chicago skyline as if he were Caesar at the Rubicon—and the whole picture resembles nothing so much as a Charles Atlas ad—but it clearly isn't a Royko product.) Instead, he can simply draw on his sense of the city to explain Daley by roles that are closer to hand. For example:

As pallbearer. A lot of Daley's success as a politician has owed to the strength of his heart, the durability of his liver, and the steady hands of his chauffeur. For he climbed up the ranks of the Democratic Organization of Cook County only as quickly as the men above him died off, usually at early ages. Heart trouble or the bottle got most of them. And Daley's strongest rival for the job of Organization chairman—"Boss"—died in an auto accident only a few days before he and Daley were to have collided politically. It seems Daley was continually helping to carry these men through the church door and then taking up their power.

As musician. In a series of party and public jobs, Daley got the chance to watch the wenching and thieving of his colleagues. He never indulged himself, yet he never blew the whistle on anyone else, either. He showed his loyalty to the party guys and, at the same time, kept his own sheet clean. As the old white slavery adage goes, it's okay to play the whorehouse piano, as long as you don't become a pimp.

As press lord. Chicago's newspapers have cornered Daley at least a dozen times. And they always let him get away. It's no accident, though: punches are pulled. The pattern usually is the same:

The newspapers knowingly print the mayor's lie or alibi about the current crisis. Or, at least, they make sure their reporters lay off the tough questions. This gives the mayor some time. His aides use it to draw up a scheme, secretly.

Meanwhile, the newspapers are trying their hand at solving the crisis. They come up with plans and remedies of their own. And, *mirabile dictu,* these plans and remedies closely resemble the secret plan of City Hall. Suddenly, at a press conference, Mayor Daley brings his plan to light. The newspapers immediately embrace it—and him—since it was their plan all along, wasn't it? They compliment themselves for their resourcefulness and praise Daley for his wisdom and openness. The editorial writers grind it out: Whatever else his critics may say about him, they never accuse Mayor Daley of refusing to listen to a good idea, and this week the mayor again displayed . . .

As egomaniac. Mayor Daley has nev-

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er publicly admitted to a mistake. He holds grudges and uses the power of his office to settle them. He didn't hesitate to try to save his own tail during the convention by brazenly lying to a befuddled Walter Cronkite about a murder conspiracy against the leading Democratic candidates for the Presidency—and against him, too, Dick Daley, America's most influential Democrat during those August days at the International Amphitheatre.

Royko neglects a critical area of Chicago politics, though: the role of Daley's business and industrial allies.

For instance, he writes an entire chapter on Martin Luther King's campaign against the Daley regime. And he concludes it by telling some good stories about the so-called Summit meeting—Daley and King—held during the riotous summer of 1966. One of the key figures at the conference, however, was Ben Heineman of the Chicago NorthWestern Railway (now of a holding company, Northwest Industries). A strong Daley supporter, he nevertheless served as a broker during the talks, because, as National Democratic Party industrialists go, he held some fairly good civil rights credentials. Royko never mentions him.

Nor does he mention William Patterson of United Airlines. He was the first Republican businessman to go for Daley some 12 years ago. And he broke ground for all of the other GOP defectors. The Republican National Committee called him on the carpet for backing a Democrat and informed him he was to be denounced publicly. Fine, said Patterson, but first return all the money I've given to the national party. The RNC backed down.

He doesn't explain anything about the multi-millionaire James C. Downs of the Real Estate Research Corporation. For twenty years until 1968, he worked actively as one of Chicago's two or three most powerful men. His influence on the city's land and racial policies is still extremely strong. Royko tries to mention him tangentially, but instead mistakes him for the salaried manager of O'Hare Field, William Downes.

Also neglected is Fairfax Cone, the advertising executive. "The man really knows how to use a good sock in the jaw," Cone once said of Daley. And he consequently revealed one of the mayor's real fascinations for these businessmen. It isn't only his eagerness to deliver for them on favors and conveniences. It isn't only his ability to let them express their brand of civic involvement and pride. It's also the romance of the Daley machine, its roughneck reputation. As these men endorse the machine, they also indulge their own *machismo*.

Still, the Royko book is good because it ditches a lot of the clichés of the whole urban crisis *genre*. For years now, urban affairs hustlers—journalists, politicians, consultants, foundation executives, civil rights lecturers—have been hacking out all these remarkably turgid books. Usually, it seems, a brace of self-appointed organizers and their girl friends, armed only by an acronymic title and a month-to-month lease on a ghetto storefront, are ill-fatedly struggling against the corner grocer, or the pastor of a dying church, or a frightened police rookie, or a naive welfare caseworker, or one of the other top-echelon decision makers of the corporate society. Eventually, the organizers will lose their righteous battle, and is there any justice to that? Another book pitch is to accuse Washington bureaucrats of breaking their promise to the nation's poor. Or, a recent addition to the crisis literature: the battle against poverty and the fight for ecological balance are, these books argue, *one and the same!*

Yet, only a few of those books tell so much as a single funny story or a genuinely moving one. Rarely do they show any kind of true feeling for city life. They don't show a sense of the way things go around the steel mills and the gas stations and the night police courts. They say nothing about electricians and insurance investigators. So, if Royko picks up on such people while he misses some other things, it's excusable.

(However, Royko does make one absolutely inexcusable mistake. After the '68 convention, *Hard Times* (nee *Mayday*) got hold of a lip-reader to tell what Daley had yelled at Abraham Ribicoff while the Senator was denouncing the Chicago police as a Gestapo. Well, as this guy read it, Daley was shouting a long string of obscenities and ethnic slurs. Royko quotes this account and then gives his own checks on it. The reports of several different witnesses balance out on *Mayday's* side. Yet, as members of the mayor's staff assure me, this impression is totally wrong. Actually, they say, the mayor bellowed: "I do not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your . . .")

James Cunningham's book belongs to the urban crisis mainstream. It's a quick, preliminary look at how the politics of the last 10 years encouraged some City Hall skills and discredited others. He judges four mayors on their ability to think ahead and take risks. Daley comes up a poor third—behind New Haven's Richard Lee and Pittsburgh's Joseph Barr, and ahead of Cleveland's Ralph Locher—yet he's the only one of them to hang on.

As his yardstick, Cunningham takes the way the mayors reacted to the Economic Opportunity Act. Before it, he writes, "the mayors were largely cut off from their most troubled constituents: from the poor, the blacks, the uneducated, and large masses of other people who did not belong to groups and associations and had no part in public decisions. . . . The anti-poverty program offered a prepaid vehicle to open up this communication—and to tap vast new sources of talent. . . . For the mayors it represented opportunity, yes, but required risk, venturesomeness, and innovation . . ."

He sized up Chicago's poverty war during a quick 1966 trip. He visited black neighborhood centers on the West Side and South Side. He interviewed the executive director of the citywide program. And the mayor talked to him, too.

His findings: The neighborhood centers didn't let the poor influence the programs there. The citywide program was run by a committee dominated by industrial and professional people. And the mayor, as a matter of policy, discouraged participation by poor people.

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"I have talked to a number of Congressmen, and they really didn't know what they were doing when they passed the act," Mayor Daley told Cunningham. "They did not spell out what they meant by participation. Sargent Shriver himself has said, 'You don't have a man who will live in a new house design it.' " And so Cunningham gives the mayor a low score for his whole performance.

Well, everything Cunningham writes about Chicago's poverty war is true—it's strictly a patronage hustle—but Daley is still getting bum rapped. His three sentences on the Economic Opportunity Act add up to as short and straight a legislative history as anyone has ever done. In fact, it's a legitimate one, too. A number of accounts have been written of how the law was put together. The most intriguing are those by the members of the White House task force on the whole poverty project: Daniel Moynihan, James Sundquist, and others. If these stories are taken together, they provide an awfully prismatic effect—a *Rashomon* of social welfare policy. Anyhow, one of the purposes of the law was to shore up the Democrats' big-city machines. And that's exactly how Daley handled it.

Bill Gleason writes a sports column for the Chicago *Sun-Times*. He is read and discussed five days a week by the men on the garbage trucks and the young prosecutors at the Criminal Courts Building. Occasionally he hits on an elegant image. At first, then, the idea of a sportswriter—a sentimental Irish sportswriter—doing Mayor Daley seems sound.

This is so because the politics of Chicago sports ties snugly into the politics of the Organization. Ralph Metcalfe, a black Congressman and the heir to the late William Dawson's role as the black boss, starred at Marquette as a track man and won an Olympic gold medal. Joseph Bertrand, Daley's choice for city treasurer, was a basketball All-American at Notre Dame. (Both are Catholics. For some reason, black Catholics do well inside the Organization, particularly if they have Irish names: thus, there are black ward leaders named Shannon and Kelley, while the top-ranking black police official is a Nolan.) The Republican governor put Ernie Banks on the Chicago Transit Authority board, so Daley put Gale Sayers on the Chicago Park District board. The park board's president, Daniel Shannon, starred at end at ND, while the old All-American halfback, Johnny Lattner, runs a saloon where a lot of the pols drink. The Catholic Youth Organization controlled a lot of patronage during Bishop Bernard Sheil's day: dozens of CYO veterans have gone on to become alderman, judges, prosecutors, and City Hall staffers. And so on.

Gleason doesn't go into any of this. He doesn't show how the Democrats have used sports programs to build up publicity and patronage and to recruit political timber—blacks especially—or how the adolescent ideology of the Catholic locker room can affect the style and values of so many of the Chicago politicians.

Instead, Gleason's craft influences the book altogether differently. He brings his sports-page style of analysis to vital questions of life, justice, order, and law. He moralizes, indulges Monday morning hindsight, and, eventually, slips into a bittersweet sort of resignation about things. Daley's shoot-to-kill order, for instance, comes off at Gleason's hand as the moral equivalent, roughly, of Ted Williams' throwing his bat and then hockering into the first base seats: a flash of anger, sure, and a lack of class—but he's still good for The Game.

Mayor Daley wouldn't talk to Royko, although he's a lifelong Chicagoan. The out-of-town professor, Cunningham, departed his Chicago job about 10 years ago, yet he rated an audience easily. That's the way City Hall operates. Local reporters are lucky if the mayor gives them five minutes alone more than once a year (Gleason was shut out, too). The reporters for the national press, though, for *Fortune* and the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week*, they get the full routine: a private chat with the mayor, an archive of documents and blurbs, briefings by the Daley cabinet, a chauf-

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feur-driven limousine tour of the local showcases, and whatever else might inspire stories to bolster the Gross Chicago Product. Yet, after 16 year of this stuff, the anecdotal history of Daley's rise to power is written by a local guy —and a Pole, on top of it—who somehow thinks Chicago is his town, too.

Confessions of a Cultist

ANDREW SARRIS

Simon and Schuster, $8.95

FOSTER HIRSCH

Confessions of a Cultist, Andrew Sarris' collection of film criticism, is the work of our most cinemate critic. No other American film critic has Sarris' encyclopedic knowledge and recall; no other critic is as visually sophisticated; no other critic, in short, has quite Sarris' feel for discussing *film* form and *film* content. And next to (or perhaps right up there with) James Agee, Sarris is the most influential critic we've ever had.

As the chief American representative of the *auteur*-oriented criticism developed by *Cahiers du Cinéma*, Sarris has been largely responsible for the revaluation in this country of the American cinema. In appreciating the direct, efficient, economical technique of commercial American films, Sarris has reversed the usual tendency of the intellectual critic of extolling the foreign art film over the disdained or at best underrated Hollywood product. Sarris has performed the much-needed service of celebrating the distinctive virtues of American movies, and his analyses of typically American genres such as the western, the gangster film, and the musical comedy are sound cultural criticism as well as incisive internal analysis.

Sarris, then, has been instrumental in establishing the American reputations of directors like Ford and Hawks. A whole generation of film-oriented college students with a passion for the films not only of Ford and Hawks and Hitchcock and Welles, but also for those of Preminger and Robert Aldrich and Blake Edwards, are Sarris' critical stepchildren. In addition to their adulation of "pantheon" directors, these enthusiasts share with Sarris an interest in intellectualizing the content of unpretentious genre pieces, and in looking for the triumph of directorial style over material which, left to run its natural course, would be as undistinguished as the pulp fiction from which it derives.

The *auteur* theory, which exalts certain grace-given directors, inevitably breeds cultist criticism. Often, the cult critic must perform like a contortionist in order to rationalize his director's mistakes or in order to establish the thematic and stylistic consistency which he maintains are a director's identification badge. Used with discretion, the *auteur* theory can be a useful critical tool, but, for the unwary, it can ignite a kind of fan mail enthusiasm buttressed by mystical evocations of style. Sarris' writing here happily avoids the excesses to which the *auteur*-addicted critic is prey. Despite their preoccupation with directorial personalities, these reviews are less cultist in spirit than Sarris' idiosyncratic, quasi-mystical 1968 book, *The American Cinema*, which, with its hierarchical ranking of directors and its wealth of facts, is a true cultist's delight. And, under the pressure of trying to cover a vast subject in a compact manner, Sarris' high-flown generalizations are the essence of cultist diction:

> The Hawksian hero acts with remarkable consistency in a predominantly male universe.
> Fritz Lang's cinema is the cinema of the nightmare, the fable, and the philosophical dissertation.
> If Ford's heroes are sustained by tradition, the Hawksian hero is upheld by an instinctive professionalism.

Despite its title, *Confessions of a Cultist* is less elitist, less specialized. The reviews, in fact, are marked by balanced appraisal, by judicious ability to separate the good from the bad within individual films—even films by pantheon directors. Only once in the collection, in Sarris' unreasonable overreaction to John Ford's *Seven Women*, did I feel that cultist loyalty intruded on critical judgment. I find especially suspect Sarris' assertion that "the fake Metro set and sky" are an attempt at Brechtian distancing and that this strained, poorly acted film is "for the ages."

Because of his belief in the overriding importance of a director's world view and his visual personality, Sarris typically analyzes the film under discussion within the context of a director's entire career. Almost every review is threaded with cross-references to visual and thematic motifs in the director's earlier work. This attention to historical perspective inevitably deepens and solidifies Sarris' appraisals.

Unlike some of his colleagues, Sarris really *looks* at films. His astonishingly detailed knowledge of directors' careers is almost matched by his evident familiarity with technical aspects of filmmaking: he knowingly discusses lenses, montage, camera angles, camera movement within the frame, use of space and color. On the whole, he is more attentive to what he sees than what he hears; he insists, unlike Pauline Kael, for instance, on the difference in means and effects between film and

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literature or between film and any of the other arts. But he is not a visual purist; he does not, like Dwight MacDonald, believe that the introduction of sound impaired the true development of cinema. Sarris' aesthetic criteria, in fact, are surprisingly flexible:

> Cinema is everything. Image, sound, music, speech, color. It may have been born illiterate, but it has learned to speak, and it is time the aestheticians of illiterate images realized that Carl Dreyer's *Gertrud* is the picture of the year because people sit and talk on a couch, and there is no greater spectacle in the cinema than a man and a woman talking away their share of eternity together.

One of Sarris' strengths is the range of his tolerance. As a cultist, he of course likes the kiss-kiss-bang-bang movie–like virtues of gutsy directors like Don Siegel and Sam Fuller, but he also applauds the purist cinema of Bresson and Dreyer and the humanist cinema of Renoir.

Though he doesn't overdo it, Sarris has the serious critic's predilection for countering the general critical appraisal of a film. He likes to help out the modest genre film or offbeat low budgeter which has been trounced or ignored (*The Bliss of Mrs. Blossom, Don't Make Waves*) or to deflate the overreaction to reserved seat bonanzas by impersonal directors like David Lean or William Wyler. Perhaps this critical counterthrust is to some extent responsible for his relative coolness to big guns like Antonioni (whose alienated characters induce "Antoni-ennui" in Sarris), Bergman (Sarris does not convice me that Bergman lacks "an instinctive affinity to the medium"), and Fellini (whom Sarris feels was most truly cinematic in his earlier humanist realist films rather than in his later rococo excesses).

A true professor of the cinema, Sarris' references seldom extend beyond the world of films. There are occasional references to social and political phenomena, there are literary references and interpretations—Sarris is not altogether an isolationist—but these extra-film comments and observations are only by way of warm-up. His fondness for material purely filmic is stated in his review of Hitchcock's *The Birds*:

> *The Birds* is here, and what a joy to behold a self-contained movie that does not feed parasitically on outside cultural references–Chekov, Synge, O'Neill, Genet, Behan, Melville, or what have you. Drawing from the relatively invisible literary talents of Daphne Du Maurier and Evan Hunter, Alfred Hitchcock has fashioned a major work of cinematic art, and 'cinematic' is the operative term here, not 'literary' or 'sociological.'

These days film critics are personalities in their own right. Like directors and actors, they have readily identifiable personae. Unlike, say, intense Pauline Kael or waspish John Simon, Sarris is not remarkable for the liveliness of his personality. His opinions are certainly personal enough, but surprisingly little of the person behind or beneath the critic gets into the reviews. And his prose style is hindered by his overripe fondness for alliteration, puns, antitheses. His linguistic indulgences impose a mass magazine congeniality —and impersonality—which wars with his rigorous critical sensibility. Sarris is too astute, and his *Village Voice* readers are too knowing, to be bothered with *Time*-like attempts at verbal showing off.

Sarris and Pauline Kael, who are refreshingly unlike, are our two indispensable film critics. Miss Kael simply writes better than anyone else, Sarris knows more about filmmaking and film history than anyone else. Following their work offers a stimulating critical dialectic. Reading Miss Kael, one learns a lot about how to *look* at *films*.

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REVIEWERS

RALPH WHITEHEAD, JR., is writing a book about Chicago's politics of law and order.

FOSTER HIRSCH has written for the *New York Times* and *The Nation*.

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The New Jesuits

GEORGE RIEMER

Little, Brown, $6.95

JOHN L'HEUREUX

Why George Riemer called his book *The New Jesuits* escapes me, unless it was because he felt the old ones were no longer a salable commodity. The eleven men he interviews—one famous, several prominent, all of them distinguished— are not *new* Jesuits in the sense that they represent any new and agreed-upon concern of the Order as a whole. In fact that is precisely what is bugging a good number of them: that the Jesuits as a religious order, are *not* new, that they refuse to have anything to do with the new.

The confused Catholic who buys the book under the impression that he will discover where the Jesuits are and where they're going will be at the very least frustrated. The book is not about the Jesuits, new or old; it is about eleven atypical men and what they think. But approached as what it is, a book of interviews, *The New Jesuits* makes very interesting reading.

Naturally the most stimulating of the interviews is Daniel Berrigan's. He is brilliant and articulate, as so many Jesuits are, but with Berrigan there is a difference. Everything he says about life and belief has an authority that goes beyond ordinary rational discourse; this may be because he has staked his life on his beliefs in a way very few men ever do; it may be, as *Time* would have it, that he is something of a Prophet; it may be because he is not, like most of us, that classic innocent bystander who forfeits his innocence by merely standing by. Whatever the reason, he speaks hard truths in a way that obliges us to listen and persuades us to believe.

The other interviews are interesting principally for the individual characters that are revealed. Riemer is an excellent questioner who continually nudges his subjects around to the twin problems of what the Jesuits are doing (they're in politics, poetry, law, medicine, you name it) and whether the Order really has a chance to survive (opinion divided, prognosis hopeful). But even as he nudges, he allows his subjects to unfold themselves at considerable length and to whatever depth they are able and willing. Some use the opportunity as an ego trip; there is one sad interview in which it appears that the man has reversed the traditional roles and is distraught because the Order is not following him. But in most cases what we get is a glimpse into the minds of men who are professionals.

George Shoup, the Kennedy Foundation's first Medical Ethics Scholar, knows medicine and knows ethics and clearly does his job well. John Culkin is in communications: though Fordham made no use of him, Big Business will. Walter Ong teaches and writes and thinks a lot. And so of the others; they are professionals to a man.

The astonishing thing is that nowhere in the book, Berrigan excepted, is there any indication of why these men are priests or why they are Jesuits. With all the talk about hyphenated priests (priest-sculptor, priest-lawyer, priest-politician), we wonder what is on the front end of that hyphen. Is being a priest just something you *are*, like being Irish or white or fat? Is being a Jesuit like belonging to a rather exclusive gentleman's club? Doesn't the priesthood and the Order make you different, make terrible demands on who and what you are? Surely the fact that thousands of men leave the priesthood each year indicates it's a pretty hard life. Yet these New Jesuits appear to carry their priesthood well and lightly. And invisibly. So invisibly that you find yourself thinking, well, what *is* a priest then? And you wonder, impertinently, when these men last asked themselves that question.

But they are interesting men, all of them. Eleven intelligent conversations in one book is no small thing. And there is the added bonus of Riemer's introduction, a chapter of reminiscence about a Jesuit style of life he thinks no longer exists: endless study, enclosed living, survival of the fattest. It's a style that was still around a year or so ago.

The common denominator Riemer finds in these conversations is "the feeling of a strong concern for the human. The human black. The human poor. The suffering war-hurt human." And on and on.

The common denominator I find is a concern for expertise, for professionalism. Nothing very new about that. Nothing terrifically hopeful either.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 155)

as a contribution toward exploring Kazantzakis' thinking.

However, I feel that Professor Blenkinsopp has distorted Kazantzakis' message by laying too much stress on its Nietzschean elements. The Bergsonian vision of creative struggle is *not* "cancelled out by the Nietzschean finale" in *The Saviors of God,* as the Professor would have us believe. What he calls "the Nietzschean finale" is really the ultimate destruction of what Kazantzakis calls "rotten-thighed hope" —that hope which holds us to masks and evasions and which looks toward the past. The statement from which Blenkinsopp quotes—that God and man are one, and that "even this one does not exist!"—is Bergsonian in the highest sense, for it points beyond what could become the ultimate "sure and final hope" toward unknown possibilities which lie in germ within or beyond it. Kazantzakis is rigorous in his logic, but it is not a Nietzschean conclusion that he reaches.

It is the Bergsonian element that gives purpose and meaning to the Nietzschean and makes the whole of Kazantzakis' thought positive. It seems to me that Professor Blenkinsopp is still tied to the traditionally depressive, gloomy Western tradition which sees man as a hope-less creature, who, without God, will end up in No-thing. That Nietzsche died a madman may lend truth to the myth, at least for some. But Kazantzakis is not a Western thinker, and cannot be forced into that mold. Nietzsche may have provided him with a philosophical framework for understanding the struggles of his own people (the Cretans), but Bergson moved him beyond that basic nihilism toward the idea of a joyful struggle. Man may be terrified by the Abyss, by Chaos, but his terror is only momentary. He immediately, in Kazantzakis' scheme, moves beyond it to joyous struggle, because he sees that only through struggle with Chaos will he be able to transform himself and create a new life.

In this sense, Zorba is not "lost," as Blenkinsopp would say. Zorba is atypical of all Kazantzakis' characters (perhaps he most closely approximates the village idiot) because his main struggles—with loyalty, duty to country, family, etc.—are primarily in the past, and he is able to dance joyously in spite of the painful, tortured reality that breaks in upon him from time to time (Bouboulina's death, the widow's murder, failure of the mining enterprise, etc.). It is the Boss who is "lost" —lost, in the sense that he does not "understand," that he is still a struggler. The Boss may understand that struggle is man's lot, but he does not understand what Zorba understands: that there is no such thing as "hope," that all hopes are false. In all of Kazantzakis' works, Zorba is perhaps his "purest" character, in that it is he who is most able to dance. Even St. Francis, the other great dancer in the books, is still more a struggler. All the others —The Boss, Manolios, Yanaros, Christ, Brother Leo, Michaelis—are strugglers. "There is no such thing as freedom," Father Yanaros says, "but only the struggle for freedom." Zorba already knows this; The Boss does not. Zorba fears nothing, and is free. He greets Chaos joyfully, as the ancient Cretan greeted the Bull-Titan, without fear, and transforms himself. The Boss is still a novice, still a "chewer of words," as Blenkinsopp says in his article.

It is interesting, as Professor Blenkinsopp points out, that it is Zorba who has been singled out by many Western commentators for special attention. He is a kind of Christ figure—a Christ *after* the Resurrection—the kind of figure that we have always idealized in the West. We tend to forget, perhaps, that a man dances only after he has *learned* to dance; only after he has disciplined himself, gotten himself loose enough. The primary contribution in Nikos Kazantzakis' work, as in his life, is *struggle,* "the struggle for freedom."

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IT STRIKES US that this April 23 issue serves as a good example of *Commonweal's* consistent timeliness. At a moment of growing demand for reexamination of America's foreign policy, concern with problems of empire is reflected in three of the articles. Frank Getlein places involvement in Indochina in this general context in a most original manner; Joan Wyatt sizes up battling Unionists, Nationalists and British troops in Northern Ireland and ventures the outlines of a solution; Robertson and Fishkin tell of the extreme to which isolating censorship carries *apartheidist* South Africa.

These pages also provide other typical *Commonweal* features such as Ralph Whitehead's lead review of three new books on controversial Mayor Daley of Chicago, while Arcadi Nebolsine casts light on the travail of the artist in America today in his portrait of John Rudge, who was recently found murdered in a squalid Bowery apartment.

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